

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

RUBY JEAN MAH

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

IN

PAINTING

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

WINTER 1999



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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Final Visual Presentation

submitted by RUBY JEAN MAH in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art.

The University of Alberta

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I hereby release the following works for incorporation into the University Collections,
University of Alberta, as part of the Master of Fine Arts Thesis Collection:

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	SIZE
Elves Who Laugh at the Wind	1998	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Canvas Tubing on Paper	53.5" x 53.5" (Diamond)

Insurance Value: \$960.00

the stolen child

Ruby J. Mah

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN PAINTING
MFA PAINTING

THE ARTIST WOULD LIKE TO THANK
ERA III - ENERGY MEDICINE CENTRE,
CALGARY, ALBERTA FOR THEIR
SPONSORSHIP

THIS EXHIBITION IS THE FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION FOR

OPENING RECEPTION
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1999
7:00PM TO 10:00PM

PUBLIC VIEWING
FEBRUARY 16 TO
MARCH 7, 1999

1-1 FINE ARTS BUILDING
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
112 STREET AND 89 AVENUE
EDMONTON, CANADA
T6G 2C9
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TUESDAY TO FRIDAY.. 10 AM-5 PM
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POSTER DESIGN BY ADRIAN SUVA

University of Alberta

Department of Art and Design

gallery

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Time Arts Building

The Stolen Child

Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water-rats:
There we've hid our faery vats,
Full of berries
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, O human child!
To the water and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim grey sand with light,
Far off by furthest Rosses
We foot it all the night,
Weaving olden dances,
Mingling hand and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight;
To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles,
While the world is full of troubles
And is anxious in its sleep.
Come away, O human child!
To the water and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glen-Car,
In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star,
We seek for slumbering trout
And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams;
Leaning softly out
From ferns that drop their tears
Over the young streams.
Come away, O human child!
To the water and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Away with us he's going,
The solemn-eyed:
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the warm hillside
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace into his breast,
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal-chest.
For he comes, the human child,
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand
From a world more full of weeping than he can understand.

The works compiling this exhibition ***The Stolen Child*** have been the result of a spiritual self journey. Having experienced several personal losses within a short period of time, they served as the fuel behind the three series in the exhibition. The processes of painting were used as a means to express visually the internal thoughts and feelings I felt. At times, and by turn, both overwhelming and enlightening, this passage through pain and grief has proved to be most fulfilling and complete. I have emerged from this journey with a greater understanding of life, myself and the celebration it entails.

The Book of Secrets Series was an initial venture into uncharted territory, the opening of doors once shut and never questioned, the testing of new waters. *The Book of Secrets* is exactly that; a book of secrets if you are without the language to delve into the mysteries. It is the enigma of all that can be. *The Book of Secrets Series* was the learning of the language, the opening of the doors, the beginning of understanding.

The Return of the Magi Series was the discovery phase. Once the seed was planted, a growth cycle was initiated. It was the emergence through the doors into the morass, mastering the language and understanding it. This series was the turning of the pages of the book, the discovery of the mysteries and the unravelling of the enigmas that so intrigued me.

The last series, *The Oracles of Egress* was the denouement of the journey, the final blooming. I carry the outcome of this journey into a new chapter of my life. It enriches me, makes me whole yet challenges me to a new adventure. I exit through new doors a little wiser hopefully and willing to risk that leap of faith. *The Oracles of Egress* are about the celebration of life.

Acknowledgements

This Exhibition is dedicated to the memory of my mother, who taught me that integrity and courage go hand in hand; that while we may strive for integrity in our daily life, it is often only courage that keeps us on the path.

My mother shared with me her strengths of character and gave to me the understanding of the spirit of life, and for that I thank her.

God grant me
the serenity to accept
the things I cannot change;
the courage to change
the things I can,
and the wisdom to know
the difference.

I wish to thank the following people:

First, my Supervisor Phil Darrah for his quiet words of wisdom and wry sense of humor that kept me going. There is an old adage that says "a little bit of a good thing goes a long way". Well Phil, they were right and it is with great affection that I thank you for the advice and support given that enabled this exhibition to attain the calibre it has.

My committee members: Lois Hole, Chancellor of the University, Dr. Henry Klumpenhower of the Music Department, Professor John Freeman and Dr. Desmond Rochfort.

Dick Der, our inestimable Painting Tech without whose expertise help this show would never have made it off the ground and on the walls, literally. Admit it Dick, you enjoyed every minute of it didn't you?

To the guys who assisted at different stages of the framing process; Grant Mah, Artur Augustynowicz, Nick Rudnicki and Rob von Eschen, Thank you.

Special thanks goes to Dennis Panylyk and Dave Seghers of Art Placement Ltd. for walking me through the framing process and all their patience in dealing with my endless questions. And as for the hinging they've done on the works. Remember Dennis, if they fall, it's *your* fault.

Mike Bowman for all his time and the great job he did in the imaging and layout of my postcard invitation in readying it for the printers. I learned a lot just watching you Mike.

Bonar McCallum and Quality Color Press for their time and generosity.

Adrian Suva for such a good job in designing my poster.

A well deserved thank you to the ladies in the Art Store, Joanne Dowson and Debra Lalonde for all the times that they bent over backwards to ensure that I would have the proper art supplies and especially for their friendship and support.

Special Thank you's to the S & M Catering Chicks aka Joanne Dowson, Sharon Orescan and Debra Lalonde for taking care of my reception and making all the food. And to Sarah Dowson for booking time off to help out at the reception.

Grad Students Julian Brezden, Maria Segovia and Artur Augustynowicz for the very sanity of their insanity. It's been a slice guys! I've enjoyed spending time with you from the hijinks to the offbeat discussions.

The Bar Crew from Hell: Grant Mah, Sharon Hjartarson, Debra Lalonde, Jeff Lin, Brandy Basisty, Nick Rudnicki, Michelle Scheepers, Artur Augustynowicz, Sharon Delblanc and Klara Zold.

Of course, thanks to Blair Brennan, Gallery Manager, and his crew of assistants: Daryl Rydman, Kristene Miller, Rebecca Beardmore and Fiona Connell for their consistent professionalism. And to all those that I may have missed I apologize.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge that certain titles of works in the exhibition are excerpts from the poems of Guillaume Apollinaire.

Slide List - Ruby J. Mah

<u>Title</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Size</u> (inches)	<u>Date</u>
1. The Book of Secrets	Acrylic, Silica Slag, Velour Fabric, Gold Foil, Velvet, Paper, Burlap on Masonite	32 x 24	1997
The Book of Secrets Series:			
2. Night Returning with a Thousand Eyes	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Paper, Opalescent Plastic Wrap on Paper	38.25 x 38.25	1998
3. My Shadow My Ancient Snake	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Foil Confetti, Glitter, Sisal Twine on Paper	45.5 x 35.25	1998
4. The Hours Fell Like Leaves	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Wrapping Paper, Glitter on Paper	35 x 45.25	1998
5. Dark Dark River I Remember, Divinely I Meditate	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Glitter, Plastic Reflectors on Paper	38.25 x 38.25	1998
6. Rhythms of Spring Water	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Opalescent Plastic Wrap on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1998
7. This Ancient World	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Recycled Pulp Forms, Light Exposure Film on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1997
8. Tell Me Mother Why You Are Grieving	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Foil Confetti, String on Paper	38.25 x 38.75	1998
9. Pines Fall in the Gothic Wind	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Sisal Twine, Paint Skins on Paper	38.25 x 38.25	1998
10. The River Like My Sorrow	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Recycled Pulp Forms, Paint Skins, Sisal Twine on Paper	38 x 38	1997
11. Elves Who Laugh at the Wind	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Canvas Tubing on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1998
12. You Danced There a Little Girl, Will You Dance as Grandmother	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Chenille Stems on Paper	38 x 38	1998
13. And the Eternal Sound	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Wool Felt, Ornamental Straw on Paper	29.5 x 45.25	1998

14.	Never More on Earth	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Audio Tape, Color Cellophane on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1997
15.	Fatal Fatal Mystery	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Styrofoam Peanuts, Paint Skins, Acrylic Chunks on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1997
16.	Wind and Wood Weeping I Burn in the Midst	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Foil Confetti, Acrylic Chunks on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1998
17.	Sky and Earth Lost	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Metal Foil on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1998
18.	The Color of Autumn Chestnuts	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Recycled Pulp Forms, Acrylic Chunks on Paper	38 x 38.25	1997
19.	Faeries and Sorcerers That Enriched Us	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Light Exposure Film, Glitter on Paper	53.5 x 53.5	1998

The Oracles of Egress Series:

20.	The Subtle Reasoning; What the Gypsy Foretold	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Audio Tape, Unbleached Paper, Chenille Stems on Paper	43 Diameter	1998
21.	Comes a Springtime of New Sorrow	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Paint Skins, Light Exposure Film on Paper	43 Diameter	1998
22.	We Can Weep Without Absurdity and Know How to Laugh	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Ornamental Straw, Foil, Chenille Stems on Paper	48 x 60	1998
23.	The Triad is Male and God is a Mother	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Cardstock, Sisal Twine on Paper	50 x 60	1998
24.	In the Garden of My Memory	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Burlap Cover, Opalescent Plastic Wrap on Paper	43 Diameter	1998
25.	Kneeling on the Shore of Heaven You Who Are Not Yet Born	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Colored Foil, Light Exposure Film on Paper	43 Diameter	1998
26.	I Glimpse the Sweet Adventure	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, Audio Tape on Paper	43 Diameter	1998
27.	The Nest of My Courage	Acrylic, Cheesecloth, Silica Slag, Glass Beads, CDs, Opalescent Plastic Wrap on Paper	43 Diameter	1999

